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South Africa

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THE  
DUTCH REFORMED CHURCH  
AND  
THE NATIVE PROBLEM.



## THE D. R. CHURCH AND THE NATIVE PROBLEM.

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### Introductory.

The human race is passing through times more critical and strenuous than any in the whole course of its history. The recent world-war has had world-wide effects. It has broken up the fabric of old civilisations, demolished former landmarks, disturbed old relationships between man and man, wakened nascent peoples to clamant life, unloosed the ancient sanctions of religion and morality, and placed us face to face with new and delicate problems, the solution of which both duty and self-interest compel us to attempt. The political disturbances and social revolutions occasioned by the war have made themselves felt in South Africa as elsewhere, and though the questions which press for immediate discussion and settlement may be less acute here, they are all present in greater or less degree. There is, however, one matter which constitutes in a special sense our own peculiar problem, and that is the Native Question. It is as old as the European occupation of the country; it is a highly complicated problem; it looms large and ever larger on our political and social horizon; no other European community has a native problem of quite the same urgency, for while the black element in the population is decadent in Australia, heavily outnumbered by the whites in New Zealand, negligible in Canada, and politically powerless in the United States, with us in the Union of South Africa it exceeds the white population in the proportion of five to one, and is homogeneous, self-conscious, virile and vocal. Since the war, especially, there has been visible a rising tide of national self-consciousness in the Bantu peoples of South Africa. They are beginning to shape their own ideals, to develop their own latent powers, and to work out their own destiny in the political and social history of this land. They consider that the old restraints and disabilities have become irksome to them, and they are clamouring for better education, juster economic conditions, more room for expansion, both mentally and materially, a larger say in their own affairs, less interference and repression on the part of the white man. It is impossible for anyone who can discern the signs of the times to deny the existence of widespread unrest among the natives of the Union, and it would be the



worst kind of folly for anyone who has the welfare of his country at heart to ignore it.

The time then appears to be opportune for the Dutch Reformed Church, as the oldest and largest Christian denomination in South Africa, to issue a statement embodying in a general manner its views on the main aspects of the native problem, more especially in its religious and educational bearings. We have found an additional incentive to indicate our views at the present juncture in the animadversions cast upon us as a Church by prominent individuals and bodies who have represented the Dutch Reformed Church as reactionary and repressive in its attitude towards the legitimate ambitions of the South African natives. One writer, for example, says: "Then, immediately after the achievement of Union, the D. R. Church... piloted through parliament... an act calculated to stamp it indelibly as an anti-native Church." This is a charge frequently repeated by leaders of public opinion who have made no careful enquiry into the facts of the case. It is therefore our purpose in this **Memorandum** to examine as impartially as we can the grounds on which the charge is based, and to expound so far as our limits permit the attitude of our Church towards questions of native policy.

## I. Is the D. R. Church an Anti-Native Church?

A short historical retrospect is necessary. In the earliest days of the settlement it was customary to baptise slaves and natives (Hottentots) as soon as they could make public profession of their faith, and in the case of the former they received manumission simultaneously with their baptism. Slave children were invariably baptised in the same manner and at the same time as white children, and their names were entered on the baptismal register of the D. R. Church. In later years the law that a slave receiving Christian baptism should become ipso facto free was rescinded, owing to the abuses to which it gave rise. Till near the end of the eighteenth century, however, there was no missionary effort by the D. R. Church as such, for the Church was then thoroughly Erastian in its government, and its ministers were salaried officers of the Dutch East India Company. Moreover, the modern missionary era had not yet dawned. With the arrival from Holland of that godly minister, the Rev. H. R. van Lier, in 1786, a new pulse began to stir in the veins of the Church. At the end of the century mission work on a small scale was being carried on in almost every ward of the Western District. Such mission work was, as yet, but an offshoot of the work among the whites, who were themselves very poorly supplied

with ministers. In 1820 the whole Colony counted but twelve D. R. Clergymen, scattered all over the country from Cape Town to Graaff-Reinet and Uitenhage. The commencement of regular mission congregations, as distinguished from sporadic missionary efforts, is well exemplified in the history of the mission congregation at Graaff-Reinet, of which the following account was given, many years ago, by the local missionary:

“From the commencement of the nineteenth century mission work was carried on among the slaves by means of an evening school, which was conducted by members of the D. R. Church in one of the rooms of the Parsonage. Later on, in the time of Landdrost Stockenstrom, the present mission church was built by the D. R. congregation on a plot in the centre of the town, granted by Government to the Kerke-raad of that congregation, in whose name site and building were registered. The first individuals that came to conversion were confirmed as members of the D. R. congregation. When the congregation placed a regular missionary there, the coloured people were organised as a branch congregation.”

This story of the rise of a mission congregation is typical. In Cape Town, Stellenbosch, Paarl, Swellendam and elsewhere the first converts were also enrolled as members of the European congregation. In several of the older congregations there still remain persons of colour, who share the rights of membership with their white brethren, even though there exist local D. R. mission congregations, to which (for reasons which can be appreciated) they are encouraged to transfer their allegiance. Further, the congregations of St. Stephens' (Cape Town) and Herzog (Stockenstrom), consisting wholly of coloured members, are incorporated in the Synod of the Cape, and send their accredited representatives to that assembly.

Now as to the Act by which the Dutch Reformed Church, according to the writer quoted above, has “stamped itself indelibly as an anti-Native Church.” The union of the States of South Africa was consummated in 1910. In the following year the Dutch Reformed Churches of the four provinces of the Union, which are, of course, one in doctrine and in the form of church government, and are served by one Theological Seminary at Stellenbosch, decided that the time was come for their organic union. In order that the vested rights of the four individual bodies should be secured for the united Church, parliamentary legislation was necessary, and the Houses of Legislature accordingly passed an Enabling Bill (Act No. 23, 1911) which, in addi-



tion to defining the rights of the new Church Body, prescribed also the procedure to be followed by the four parties interested in order to attain to the desired union. According to the provisions of the Act, a three-fourths majority of the votes of the individual Kerkeraden was necessary for the union of the Churches to become an accomplished fact. This majority was **not secured**, and the Act, though still upon the Statute-book, is a deadletter.

But the clause in the Act to which chief exception has been taken provides: "that no coloured person, being a member of the Dutch Reformed Church of the Cape, shall have the right, by virtue of such membership, to claim membership in the United Church, in case he happens to be, or takes up his residence, in one of the other Provinces." These words have seemed to imply the permanent exclusion of coloured and native persons from membership in the D. R. Churches of the Free State, Transvaal and Natal, and therefore to be in conflict with the most elementary principles of the religion of Jesus Christ. Again, let us look at the facts. In the D. R. Church of the Cape Province, there exists, alongside of and in closest association with the European Church, a Native Church, of 74 congregations and 17,200 communicant members, with the same Calvinistic formularies, the same Presbyterian Church government, and the same succession of Church courts, which is completely autonomous. In the Free State there is a similar Native Church of 44 congregations and 9,118 communicant members. In the Transvaal there is a similar Church with 27 congregations and 8,043 members, but the establishment of a Mission Synod and Mission Presbyteries is not yet an accomplished fact.

To this fully organised Mission Church all the native and coloured members of the D. R. Church belong, and they possess and exercise rights and privileges such as appertain to members of the European Church. The Mission Church is not a denomination alongside of the D. R. Church, and only loosely allied to or affiliated with the latter: it is the D. R. Church itself.

Now, in the D. R. Church of the Cape, owing to the causes mentioned above, converts from heathenism were originally incorporated in the European Church, until subsequently a Native Church was called into being. In the Northern States, on the other hand, the coloured and native classes were from the outset excluded from membership in European congregations, and gathered together in their own separate Church. The Act of 1911 merely recognised the **status quo**, and provided that, in case coloured members of the Cape D. R. Church (whether the few still belonging to the European section of the Church, or the many incorporated in the Native Church)

should cross the Orange or the Vaal into the Northern States, they should enjoy their ecclesiastical privileges and rights in the Native and not in the European Church. It is perfectly clear, then, that they are not excluded from membership in the D. R. Church, and that no injustice is inflicted upon them by their being consigned to the Native Branch of that Church.

But why, it may be asked, was a paragraph as that quoted, to which such strong exception has been taken, ever introduced into the Act? Could it not have been omitted, and coloured members of the European D. R. Church be allowed, if they preferred it, to exercise their Church rights in white congregations of the Free State and the Transvaal, as they did in the Cape Province? The reply to this is, that this restriction of the rights of the coloured members of the Cape D. R. Church was one of the conditions *sine qua non*, upon which the Northern Churches were willing to amalgamate. The old **Grondwet** of the Transvaal, as is well known, repudiates "gelijkstelling," or equality between whites and blacks, and the Constitution of the Free State admits only white persons to citizenship. We attempt no vindication of this attitude; we merely state the facts. The D. R. Churches of those States followed the lead of the Governments in discriminating between Europeans and Natives, so far as concerned their worshipping in separate buildings and being enrolled in separate sections of the Church. It may be argued that the Cape D. R. Church should not have conceded the demand of the Northern Churches, and should have upheld the rights of those coloured individuals, who had grown up in communion with the European section of the Church. But the situation was precisely that which presented itself when the political union of the States of South Africa was under discussion. The Cape Province allows, but the Northern Provinces deny, the franchise to the native and coloured inhabitants. The latter States refused to entertain proposals for union unless their practice of exclusion was retained in their respective areas; and the Cape Province, rather than have the scheme for union suffer shipwreck, agreed to the provisos imposed. In similar fashion the Cape D. R. Church acceded to the wishes of the Northern Churches rather than forego its hopes and efforts for a United D. R. Church.

Finally, before we leave this subject, we must point out that an independent Native Church—self-supporting, self-directing and self-extending—answers most fully to that idea of a Mission Church, which our missionary efforts are endeavouring to realise. Whenever native or coloured converts are incorporated in a European Church, they occupy a subordinate position, cannot aspire to any office in the Church, and therefore have no voice in its government, and can never



hope to acquire the ability to direct their own affairs. But when the same converts are constituted as an independent body, their interest is kindled in the well-being of a Church which is in a real sense their own, in which they may fulfil the office of evangelist, elder or deacon, and which gives them ample scope and opportunity to develop their latent gifts and energies. The establishment of Native Synods in the Cape and Free State Churches and of a Native Conference in the Transvaal Church, has acted as a mighty stimulus to the native congregations, by providing a new vent for their energies, and has thus brought about a great expansion of mission work in the D. R. Churches of those provinces.

## II. What is the D. R. Church doing for the Natives?

a. **Evangelistic Efforts.** Though it is the purpose of this **Memorandum** to concentrate attention chiefly on our work within the Union, we must, in replying to the above question, necessarily refer to our missionary undertakings that lie outside the Union of South Africa. The fields outside the Union in which we labour are: Bechuanaland, Southern Rhodesia, Northern Rhodesia, Nyasaland Protectorate, Portuguese East Africa, and the Western Sudan (Northern Nigeria). In these areas we have, all told, 33 mission stations manned by ordained men, with approximately 1,214 outstations, which are school centres. There are 25,449 baptised communicants, 12,300 catechumens on trial for membership and some 73,356 pupils in the schools. On the extent of our Foreign Missions we do not, however, now enlarge. As to our so-called Home Missions, i.e. our work among coloured and native races within the Union, we have approximately 34,365 communicant members in our Native Churches and congregations with some 136,757 adherents.

These various Churches and congregations, Home and Foreign, are ministered to by a body of ordained missionaries totalling 178 (besides lay workers and women missionaries). Of this number, 25 are fully qualified ministers of our Church, who have passed through a four years' theological course at the Stellenbosch Seminary; 145 have for the most part received their theological training (a three years' course) at our Mission Training Institute, at Wellington; and the remaining 8 are ordained native pastors, trained chiefly at the Stoffberg Gedenkschool (Viljoens Drift). With reference to the financial support given by the members of our Church towards these missionary undertakings, we submit the following figures. The amounts contributed during the last financial year were: by the Cape Church, £34,875 for Missions in Bechuanaland, Rhodesia and Nyasaland, £8,452 for the



Sudan, £7,801 for Home Missions with a local contribution of £9,038, making a total of £60,166. The Free State Church contributed £9,000 for Foreign and £8,000 for Home Missions. The Transvaal Church, £18,875 for Home and Foreign Missions, and the Natal Church £400, making a total of £96,441 for the D. R. Church in the four Provinces. Taking the number of communicant members of the four Churches as 275,000, this amount works out at 7/- per member.

**b. Educational Efforts.** Education is inseparable from evangelistic work. The school in the mission field is the nursery of the Church. No indigenous native Church can be built up unless the intelligence of its members is duly developed, and the greater their progress in intelligence and judgment, as well as grace, the sooner will the Church be ripe for self-government. Elementary instruction, in at least the three r's, is imparted in all our mission schools. No candidate for baptism receives the rite which admits him to the visible Church unless he is able to read his Bible in the vernacular. On the other hand, we have not put education into the forefront of our missionary policy, and in comparison with other Societies have been backward in providing for secondary education. While in all our foreign fields we have training institutions for evangelists and normal schools for teachers, we have not, as a rule, imparted instruction in English or another European language, nor in the advanced branches of ordinary education. The number of ordained native ministers in our Mission Churches (of whom there are only eight) is small for a Church that has been engaged in foreign mission work for sixty years, for we have been cautious, perhaps unduly cautious, in ordaining native ministers. Our Stofberg Training Institution—the only institute for natives we can boast of within the Union, where native ministers, teachers and evangelists are trained—was commenced but thirteen years ago, and has since turned out 110 workers, while there are at present 55 pupils in the Institution and 200 children in the model school.

There are, however, reasons for our apparent dilatoriness in making provision for the higher education of the natives. First, we were late in the field. Other Societies, older, more experienced and more strongly staffed than ourselves, had already erected training schools at Lovedale, Morija, Botsabelo, etc., to which those of our youths who asked for secondary education, were sent. Again, we possessed, in the territories now forming the Union, no compact and unilingual field, which might have given us the opportunity and created the necessity of establishing a school for the training of teachers and preachers. In the Cape area, the language was

Afrikaans; in the Transvaal and Free State, Sesuto; in Bechuanaland, Sechuana; on the Eastern border, Xosa, and in Natal, Zulu; and in all of these areas our work, owing to our late appearance as a missionary agency, was small, and hemmed in by that of other Societies. Then, too, we have had to take into account the attitude of our Church members towards secondary education for natives. Of all the missionary enterprises in South Africa, ours is the only one of any magnitude that is supported solely by funds raised in South Africa from people who are, and have been for generations, in immediate contact with the native races. There is still a large amount of deeply-rooted prejudice against mission work generally, and against educational mission work in particular, which can only be overcome by patience and tact. There are many colonists, English as well as Dutch, who say flatly (without previous careful inquiry) that education spoils the native, that the raw native is more honest, more reliable, more polite than his schoolbred brother, and that to yield to the natives' demand for advanced education would be unwise towards the native himself and dangerous for the white man. There are many among our Dutch compatriots who remind us that they have had hardly any schooling themselves, and ask why the native should be more highly privileged. There are many who view with deepest concern the rapid growth of "poor whitism," and demand to know why our own kith and kin, who are sinking daily lower in the scale of civilisation and religion, should not have the first claim upon our sympathy and aid. These are considerations which are being constantly urged; and we have to satisfy our constituencies that we can meet their objections, before we can expect of them any great enthusiasm for the higher education of the natives.

As to the efficacy of our system of primary education, we invite attention to the Report on Native Education in South Africa, by Mr. E. B. Sargant, Educational Adviser to the High Commissioner, which was issued in 1908 (Colonial Report No. 52). He draws a comparison, very distinctly in favour of the D. R. Church, between our educational work among the Baghatla at Mochudi and the educational work among Khama's people at Serowe, and then, after a few words of praise for the enthusiasm in his work displayed by the local D. R. missionary, he continues:—"The point to be grasped is that when a Mission is directed by men who for generations have had their home in the country, and are intimately acquainted with native ways of thought and tribal organisation, such enthusiasm becomes disciplined and consequently far more effective. Among the most hopeful signs at present for the progress of the native races of South Africa is undoubtedly the activity displayed by the Dutch



Reformed Church of South Africa." (Report, p. 36). We are far from regarding the Baghatla tribe as our most fruitful missionary undertaking, even in our fields nearer home; indeed, we encounter very peculiar trials and difficulties in the work at Mochudi and Saulspoort. But we venture to quote the considered judgment of a man whose impartiality cannot be challenged, and whose commendatory words we therefore value the more highly.

### III. The Relation of Europeans to Natives.

What are the views of the D. R. Church on the relation of the White to the Native peoples? On this question our Church has made no official pronouncement, but her general attitude is nevertheless clear. The Northern Churches have defined their position with precision by disavowing the doctrine of "gelijkstelling" or equality, and though the Cape Church has nowhere formally drawn a line of demarcation between white and black, yet in practice she does not differ widely from her sister Churches. The practice of the Churches follows the doctrine of the State on the relation of the white and the black races to each other. That doctrine is, that the white race is and must remain the ruling race. The coloured and black sections of the population occupy a strictly subordinate position. This is not due, as is very generally supposed, to the accident of their colour: it is due to their lower stage of cultural development, and to their greater deficiency in foresight, in initiative, in independent judgment, in organising and directing talent, and in moral stamina. These are ethical qualities that cannot be acquired from books, and no amount of study at college or university can be accepted as a compensation for their lack. It is not to be expected that the South African natives can with one bound attain to the moral stature of those who have generations of Christian forbears behind them, and the influence of centuries of Christian life and thought flowing in their veins. The laws of evolution and of heredity forbid. The South African native has to pass in a century through an evolutionary process that for the European lasted a millennium, and he cannot do so without some detriment to his intellectual and moral growth. Some traces of hothouse forcing must survive in his character. And though fullest allowance be made for the mighty action of God's redeeming grace, yet even grace itself, in order to act at all, must be grafted on to the stem of native life and thought and feeling. It is for these reasons, we hold, that the native—understanding by this term the native people, not exceptional individuals—must be regarded and treated as a minor, whose position towards the European is not one of

equality but of inferiority, not one of co-ordination but of sub-ordination.

On the other hand, the European race must look upon the natives as a sacred trust. They are minors, whose interest we must have at heart. They are, in St. Paul's expressive phrase, "fellow-heirs," whose share in the inheritance we are bound to administer with justice and fidelity. They constitute the "white man's burden," which the latter must take up and courageously carry. The native has a claim—the claim of the weak and the defenceless in all times and places—to protection, impartial justice and righteous treatment at our hands. We confess with shame that he has not always enjoyed these elementary rights. He has not been protected from the exploitation of the wealthy and the powerful. Evenhanded justice has not been invariably meted out to him in the criminal and civil courts of the land. He has frequently been the victim of fraud, extortion, insult and cruelty. The laws of the white man have not always held good for the black man also. We deplore these transgressions, not of the law of Christ alone, but even of the law of Moses, which enjoined, "Ye shall have one manner of law for the stranger as for the home-born" (Lev. 24:22). We desire to use our utmost influence towards procuring for the native that fair and just treatment, which will inspire him with confidence in the humane intentions of those who, in the providence of God, have been entrusted with his guardianship.

This is perhaps the place to record our testimony that in our experience the natives of the Union are a law-abiding people. Though our wars with the natives have been, unhappily, many, we have had practically no insurrections to deal with. The outcry, some years ago, against the "Black Peril," was very much exaggerated, and we do not share the dread which seems to obsess some minds when this subject is mooted. We vehemently repudiate the doctrine that the native must be looked upon as a dangerous individual, who can only be governed by sjambok and rifle. It is gratifying to think that, though the old race of Boers have always been represented (most unjustly!) as the enemies and oppressors of the natives, no charge of habitual cruelty or oppression can be levelled at their present descendants. In this respect South Africa compares favourably with the Southern United States, where Judge Lynch still holds sway, and crowds of callous and degenerate whites assemble to gloat over the dying agonies of tortured negroes.

Thus far we have dealt chiefly with generalities. All responsible white men in South Africa admit that the European race has a kind of guardianship over the non-European races. The vital question is, how this guardianship should be exer-



cised. It is at this stage that those really difficult problems emerge that have taxed all the wisdom and patience of our statesmen, our missionaries and our publicists. Let us henceforth, in order to simplify the discussion, confine our attention to the Bantu, as distinct from the coloured, people. Our first endeavour must be to define as precisely as we can the position which the native races are to occupy in the social and economic scheme of the South African commonwealth. There has been much loose talk among our public men of "equal privileges" and "equal rights"—"equal rights for all civilised men south of the Zambesi," and so forth. We prefer to speak of "equal opportunities." For rightly viewed there is not, and cannot be, any such thing as equal rights. It is a doctrine not taught in the New Testament, which recognises the existence of ranks and classes in the social order, and enjoins servants to obey their masters, and every soul to be in subjection to the higher powers. Rights are relative things. The rights of a child are quite incommensurable with the rights of an adult, the rights of a servant with those of his master, the rights of the subject with those of his ruler. Moreover, there can be no exercise of a right without the assumption of responsibility, and those who claim equal rights must prove that they are ready and able to discharge equal responsibilities.

We hold, then, that the demand of the natives for equal rights is foolish and futile; but we are willing to offer them equal opportunities. That is to say, they should have the fullest and largest scope to develop themselves along their own national lines, and in accordance with the highest ideals which their national consciousness, suffused and transformed by the spirit of Christianity, shall create for them. Happily for them, race-consciousness is strongly developed among the Bantu, who in this respect stand in marked contrast to the Cape coloured population. This race-consciousness should be nourished into vigorous life, in order to form a sturdy stock on which a thoroughly indigenous native civilisation can flourish. It is a lamentable sight, and one far too common in South Africa, to see the native, whose imitative instincts are only too pronounced, sedulously striving to copy the white man, in his dress, his mode of life, his educational standard, his social and political institutions. We Europeans are ourselves greatly to blame for this result. We have tried to create a native community in our own image. Far too often have we forgotten that our aim, as missionaries, educationists and administrators, is not to turn the native into an Afrikaner, or an Englishman, or an American, or a German, but into a self-respecting Bantu Christian.

#### IV. The Education of the Native.

We touch here on a large and intricate subject, concerning which we can set down our convictions in briefest fashion only. Many South Africans affirm that a minimum of education is sufficient for the native. "Teach him to read and write, and instruct him in Bible truth, but no more. Everything else is superfluous and dangerous." With these views we cannot agree. Our reasons for holding that education is indispensable for the natives are briefly these:—

(a) Without education—and education far beyond the narrow limits of the three r's—we cannot think of achieving our purpose, the purpose at which all missionary effort must aim, of establishing a Native Church that shall support, govern, and propagate itself. If the Native Churches, in any part of the great Mission Field, are ever to achieve even a modified form of independence, education in the broadest sense, as well as instruction in religious and moral truths, is a primary requisite.

(b) The native is going to be educated, whether we will or no, and if we do not undertake his education on Christian principles, it will be conducted on un-Christian and even on anti-Christian principles. The native is not only going to be, he **is being**, educated. Every white man he meets is helping to educate him,—the missionary, the trader, the employer of labour, the government official, the socialist demagogue or the degenerate white of the brothel and the bottle-store. His contact with European civilisation—with its commerce and its railways, its postal and telegraph systems, its cities, shops and warehouses, its mines and its machinery—exercises a potent educational influence. Not even the most remote Bantu tribe, buried in the heart of Africa, but feels the influence of our Western civilisation; and the South African native, who has rubbed shoulders with the white man for several generations, experiences that influence in an accentuated degree. His education is proceeding apace, quite apart from our intervention or non-intervention.

(c) The South African native is determined to be educated. His demand for education is not in its nature an unreasonable one, and we can only resist it at our peril. To refuse it would be to create a grievance which he would brood over, and under which he would become restive and rebellious. A native populace kept in enforced ignorance would be a menace to our peace, and would expose us to the risk of insurrections like those of the servile population in ancient Rome, the slaves of eighteenth-century Haiti, or the proletariat of modern Russia. Our own security bids us grant the natives' request for instruction and enlightenment.



(d) The experience of the past reassures us. Native education has not been a complete failure, even though frequently handicapped by unqualified teachers and imperfect methods. On the contrary, in spite of individual disappointments, it has proved to be on the whole a success. The greater economical and moral value of the trained and educated native has made the effort well worth while. What would we have done without the army of tradesmen, clerks, interpreters, telegraphists, teachers, evangelists and ordained ministers, which our mission schools and training institutions have turned out?

So much for native education in general. If now we are asked whether we are satisfied with the system of native education that obtains at present, our answer must be, "Not in the least." The education of the black races has, in our estimation, been conducted on wrong lines. For more than a century it has been left to the missionaries to impart education according to their own ideas. Those ideas were governed and regulated by their respective traditions as Englishmen, Frenchmen, Germans or Americans. No settled policy was pursued, no common standard was adopted, no comprehensive scheme, suited to native thought and need, was introduced. It was assumed that systems of education which had proved successful in the case of cultured nations must of necessity be adapted to the intellectual capacity of races just emerging from barbarism. Of course, the missionaries were men of common sense, who did not carry their principles to extremes, and therefore their educational work was to a great extent successful. But the wrong assumption lying behind their educational efforts was a vitiating factor. It prevented them, as it has since prevented governments and administrators, from seeing that Bantu education must be conducted on Bantu and not on European lines. It has been an obstacle in the way of thinking out and putting into force a system of education which, while taking due account of the past history and traditions of the Bantu peoples, shall be from top to bottom adapted to their present intellectual, moral and cultural requirements. It should be a system that will call into play their noblest powers and capabilities, and enable them to realise their highest national aspirations, and fulfil their true function in the Divine plan of the ages.

### **Primary Education.**

Turning our attention now to details, we wish to state what we consider to be essential elements in an effective scheme of primary education. These are:

(1) The use of the Vernacular. It is not necessary to labour this point. The four reports of the General Missionary Conference of South Africa are full of unanimous resolutions on the subject. The Select Committee on Native Education (1908) recommended that "the vernacular should be the medium of instruction up to the entrance to Standard III." It is a recognised pedagogic principle that a child should proceed from the known to the unknown, and should receive his earliest instruction in his mother-tongue. Yet in spite of all, there these pious resolutions stand, while native children continue to display their wonderful progress in mastering English by letters of the following fashion: "Honoured Enormity, — Had not distance preponderated, I should have approximated to see you."

The reasons why the vernacular is still so little employed are these: (a) parents and pupils do not wish it: the pupils think it waste of time to study their own language, and prefer to acquire if it were but a smattering of a language like English or Dutch, which opens the way to speedier material advancement; (b) European teachers as often as not cannot teach the vernacular, and native teachers will not teach it, because the inspectors are mostly unacquainted with a native language, and conduct their examination in English. The only cure for this state of affairs is to make it compulsory to employ the vernacular as medium up to and including Standard III, and to appoint no teachers to schools and no inspectors to circuits, who cannot converse fluently in the native tongue. At the same time we recognise that the demand for a European language cannot be lightly dismissed, and would advise that Afrikaans or English (whichever the natives concerned may find more immediately necessary) be taught, conversationally, in the lower Standards, and as a formal subject from the Third Standard upwards.

(2) The introduction of a suitable curriculum. On this question we need not particularise. The vernacular being the medium, and each native child being a natural linguist, there would be no need to devote attention to grammar as a formal subject, though it could be introduced at a later stage. The curriculum should comprise: reading from books containing native folklore tales, description of animals and of the physical features of the land, and the elements of agriculture; writing and simple composition; elementary arithmetic; simple lessons in physical and local geography; history, commencing with the pupil's own tribe and country; elementary science, especially agricultural science. The afternoons should be devoted, by the younger pupils, chiefly to play, partly to work in gardens and fields; by the older pupils, chiefly to agricul-



tural and pastoral pursuits (with accompanying instruction), and partly to sport. Furthermore, we think that the Bible should have a large place in the primary school. It should be the chief aim of those entrusted with the management of the school to secure teachers who will impart moral and religious instruction in a serious and sympathetic manner. For, after all, the purpose of the school, whether primary or secondary, is to turn out a man and not an encyclopædia, and the main stress should be laid, not upon what the pupil **knows**, but upon what the pupil **is**.

### Higher Education.

The prejudice against the higher education of the natives is much more widespread and inveterate than against the primary education. The reasons for this are not merely, that advanced education tends to foster self-conceit and a disinclination for manual toil, or that it enables natives to enter the higher professions and compete with Europeans on equal terms; but that it creates a class of natives who have imbibed so much of European culture and learning, that they are like to become alienated from members of their own race, and to regard them with a measure of contempt if not of aversion. But notwithstanding these risks, we feel compelled to recognise the claim of the native for secondary education. It would be impossible, or if possible, exceedingly unwise, to cut him off from all participation in the intellectual heritage of the human race. The question is merely, whether he is able to assimilate all this intellectual pabulum without serious disturbance in his digestive organs. Here too, we think that a distinct curriculum, not modelled on European university courses, would be highly advantageous to the natives. They are often too impatient to measure their abilities with those of white students, and far too ambitious for university degrees and titles. Recollecting that four-fifths of our native population are predestined to an agricultural and pastoral life, our secondary schools should definitely aim at qualifying native students to take the lead in introducing better methods of farming among their fellow-tribesmen. The remaining one-fifth of students would have to be trained in special institutions for industrial work, commercial pursuits, the educational and ministerial callings, or, in a native university, for the profession of lawyer, doctor, dentist, land-surveyor or engineer. Special legislative provision might be made to restrict them to the exercise of their professions among their own people only, so as to meet by anticipation the objection which might be raised against their possible competition with Europeans.

## **Agricultural and Industrial Education.**

This aspect of the question is of so great importance for the due development of the natives on their own lines, that we venture to devote a paragraph to it. The land problem, as we shall see presently, is the very heart of the native problem. The quantity of land in South Africa is fixed and unchangeable: only the quality is variable and improvable. Now it is evident that the native races, tied down as they are to fixed areas, and doubling themselves every 25 or 30 years, are growing more and more uneasy at their expanding numbers and unexpanding territories. The old forces that kept population down — wars, famines, epidemics, wholesale butcheries by tyrants — operate no longer. The congestion of the natives is becoming steadily more serious, and the problem of providing for their physical needs is growing more and more acute. Their only hope lies in the soil. It must be coaxed into yielding larger harvests; and this result will only be secured when it is cultivated in a more systematic and more scientific manner. Hence the urgent need of education in agriculture.

Equally important, though from a slightly different point of view, is industrial training. It has distinct moral as well as economic value. It contributes towards the formation of a stable Christian character, by fostering the virtues of punctuality, neatness, exactitude, self-reliance and self-respect. The economic value of industrial training is patent. The native who has been taught a trade is a valuable asset to the community. He is able not only to support himself, but also to provide his family with a better home, better clothing and more wholesome food. He can assist in making his Church a self-supporting institution. If he dwells among his own people, he can aid them by effort and example to rise higher in the social scale: if among Europeans, he relieves the congestion of the native areas, and gives his neighbours a better economic chance. The fear that he will prove a redoubtable competitor with European artisans has been dispelled by the Commission on the Economic Question (1914), which showed that only  $1\frac{1}{2}$  per 1,000 of the Bantu population were gaining a living as tradesmen.

### **Concluding Remarks.**

There are two final observations which we must make before passing from the educational question. The first is this, that we have welcomed the movement for higher native education because, for one reason, we hope that it will put a stop to the flow of South African natives to America

for professional training. Much of the influence now emanating from negroedom in the United States is thoroughly unwholesome and pernicious. Booker Washington is dead, and the powerful impetus he gave to the policy of conciliation between the white and black races is apparently losing its force. American negroes are now passing under the influence and inspiration of men like Burghardt du Bois and Marcus Garvey, whose antipathy to the white race takes the most extreme form. It would be calamitous in the last degree if the views of such men were to permeate the Bantu masses of our country, and agitators who spread their doctrines should be sternly dealt with.

The other observation is this: we are persuaded that no thorough-going reform of native education is to be expected until it is entrusted to the Native Affairs Commission, in order to be administered as a system quite independent of the European system. Of course, this would imply the establishment of a new department, the erection of new training schools, and the gradual introduction of new teaching staffs. But we must face the outlay if we wish for a new system adapted to native needs; for as long as European and native education are under the same administration, the tendency to similarity of method cannot be withstood, and the reforms that are necessary will never be effected. And in view of the immense sum that the natives contribute by direct taxation, the claim that larger amounts should be devoted to their educational requirements is just and reasonable.

## V. The Segregation of the Natives.

A great deal of idle speculation has been indulged in on the question whether, a millennium hence, the blacks will have ousted the whites or the whites the blacks, from the South African soil. Such questions are utterly vain and purposeless. For 250 years the white and black races have occupied the sub-continent jointly: the blacks have not driven the whites into the sea by force of numbers, and the whites have not decimated or destroyed the blacks by force of impact. That should surely be enough to prove that the white and black races will still be living alongside of each other 250 years hence, and there is accordingly no need to worry about longer views of futurity than such as extend to the next quarter of a millennium. Both races are here to stay: the question is only, how they are going to adjust their relations towards each other.

Race fusion is a quite unthinkable solution. There were a few individuals among the earliest missionaries who leaned towards this view, among others that undoubted genius and



unpractical missionary, Dr. van der Kemp, who had imbibed most of the distinctive doctrines of Jean Jacques Rousseau. But this solution of the race question has been decisively rejected by the European population of South Africa. Anybody who ventured to advocate it today would be set down as a fanatic, or worse. The first social law of the Boer **Voor-trekkers**, a law which had for them all the force of a religious sanction, was "Thou shalt keep thy breeds pure." Lord Bryce has enunciated the dictum: "In Latin America, whatever is not black is white; in Teuton America, whatever is not white is black." It is the Teuton law that rules in South Africa. Every intermarriage between European and native lowers the white party to the level of the black; it can never raise the black to the level of the white.

If intermarriage is impossible, close social intercourse between the two races is undesirable. Hence arises the question of segregation, by which it is hoped to reduce social intercourse to a minimum. The two races must be kept distinct, not only ideally but practically, by confining the natives to certain areas, the bounds of which they shall not be permitted to overstep. So runs the theory, and a very excellent theory it is, if it only could be put into effective practice. It protects the black man's country from being encroached upon, his person from being exploited, and his manhood from being debauched, by unscrupulous Europeans: it gives him scope to develop his inherent powers and talents in a less feverish atmosphere than that created by our Western hustle and bustle: it minimises the possibilities of friction between the two races on the score of wage-fixation, commercial and industrial competition, social status, educational attainment and political voting-power. Segregation is a most excellent theory: the only question is whether, and to what extent, it lies within the scope of practical politics.

The first attempt to effect a territorial separation between the two races was made by the Natives' Land Act of 1913. The Act aimed at checking the indiscriminate occupation of natives' reserves and lands by Europeans, and of European areas by natives. One would have imagined that native opinion must have welcomed this preliminary provision for securing their lands against future European encroachment. Instead, the Act was greeted by the natives with a most determined opposition. They were deeply suspicious of its provisions, and certainly they were not quite wrong in thinking that when parliamentary legislation is adopted affecting the joint rights of white and black, it is most likely to be in the interest of the ruling race. The first attempt in the direction of segregation has not been encouraging.

Still, the land question must be faced. On its solution

depends the solution of the Native Problem. Certain areas must be definitely and finally set apart for native occupation only, and into those areas Europeans must not be allowed to intrude. Native communities or individual natives, who have acquired title in freehold or quitrent to specified lands, must be left in possession, or, if a better adjustment of boundaries demands their removal, must receive in exchange for what they are asked to relinquish, land possessing equal value and held under similar conditions of tenure. In some areas a cautious commencement might be made in introducing individual tenure, which may serve to stimulate private enterprise and do away with the present inadequate and wasteful methods of native agriculture. In this respect Glen Grey may serve as model and object-lesson. But it must be remembered that the native is wedded to a communistic theory of land tenure, and individual ownership should not be insisted upon, except where it is likely to prove more successful than the system it is meant to supersede.

But when we have succeeded in demarcating certain areas for native occupation, and in securing for them perpetual title to the lands they hold, we are as far as ever from solving the question of segregation. For segregation, strictly interpreted, implies that all intercourse between natives and Europeans must wholly cease. This is an unattainable ideal. The European does not want the native near him in his social capacity, but he wants him very badly in his economic capacity. He will have nothing to do with the native as a fellow-man in easy cultural relations with himself; but he cannot dispense with him as a worker, to till his fields, gather his harvests and work his mines. But then, what becomes of the segregation theory? The fact is, we cannot have it both ways. **Either**, the native must be rigidly segregated, and must be banished from our municipal locations, our farms and our compounds, so that we shall be without domestic servants, farm-labourers and mine-workers; **or**, we must relinquish the idea of absolute segregation, and adopt that of partial segregation, which in some respects is worse than no segregation at all. For what does partial segregation, as exemplified in the compound system now in vogue in our large mining centres imply? This, that the family life of the native is completely broken up, that his tribal restraints are relaxed, & that he lives for a year, two years, or even longer, severed from his wife and tribe, and continually exposed to those temptations to drunkenness, gambling and debauchery, which are inseparable from the life of great cities. Were it not far better for the moral health of both natives and Europeans to have, in juxtaposition to the European township, a native community, with its own schools and churches, upholding the



ideals and restrained by the sanctions of Christian family life? But this would be to sacrifice the ideal of territorial segregation.

## VI. Native Grievances.

To the existence of widespread native unrest we have already referred in our opening words. The recent outbreaks at Lovedale and Port Elizabeth point to the presence of volcanic forces, slumbering beneath the apparently placid surface of native life, which may at any moment burst forth and spread ruin and desolation. It is therefore our duty to give careful consideration to these outward symptoms, in order to arrive at an approximately accurate diagnosis of the hidden disease. In discussing this question it would be well to distinguish between grievances felt by the educated and the uneducated native respectively.

### Grievances of the Educated Native.

The educated native complains that he labours under social, economic and political disabilities, which offend his sense of justice and hamper his moral and material development. (a) The first count is, as one native writer forcibly puts it, that "in social life the educated native cannot move anywhere without being made to know that his black skin is his lifelong damnation." Separate counters at post-offices and booking offices, separate tram-cars, inferior railway-coupsés labelled "reserved," the curfew bell, the denial of ordinary hotel accommodation, and other disabilities, form the chief items in the list of complaints. Similar differentiation is sometimes observed in religious circles. The same writer says: "Even in synods, presbyteries and conferences the spirit of racial discrimination is so powerful that the black delegates have to be sorted out from the rest like goats from the sheep." That there should be any differentiation in religious and Church gatherings between blacks and whites is a sad spectacle, and, we hope, a wholly exceptional one. In our D. R. synods and presbyteries such is not the case. Each white missionary sits alongside of his black elder in the order in which the congregations they represent have become incorporated in the synod.

As for the social differentiation that is still so much **en evidence**, while we have no wish to palliate or condone it, we must nevertheless make the following observations. There are certain bounds of nationality, fixed by Divine providence, which man cannot overpass. We believe that the best and most cultured men of the Bantu race realise this. They

are proud of their nationality and have not the slightest desire to pose as white men. They have perfect confidence in the future of the black people, and are doing all they can to help their compatriots to work out their own racial salvation. And they are, or should be, as little ashamed of their illiterate fellow-natives as we Dutch-speaking South Africans can afford to be ashamed of the poor white element of our own race. Comprised within the term **Africander** are men of very diverse degrees of culture. No comparison is possible between the cabinet minister, educated, it may be, at Oxford or London, with several university and other titles to his name, and the poor white from the eastern border, living among Kaffirs and not very far removed from their social level. Yet both speak the same language, worship in the same church, mix freely at political and other gatherings, and in various respects reveal and recognise their common nationality. The same law of national solidarity binds eminent natives like Dr. Rubusana, Dr. Molema or Prof. Jabavu to other members of their own race. No matter how many years they may have spent in England or America, they cannot, and, we are sure, would not, repudiate their brotherhood with the raw Kaffir of the kraal. Now it must not be forgotten that the educated native is the exception, while the uneducated native is the rule. Even the greatest negrophilist would acknowledge that intercourse with the raw native must be governed by some form of social regulation and restraint. Now civic laws and social rules devised for the direction of the many often press somewhat hardly on the few, and it is at all times a most difficult task to introduce provisos for the exceptions. Anybody can see at a glance that a man is **black**, and falls within the scope of certain regulations; it is not so immediately evident that a man is an **educated** black, and deserves exemption from those regulations. Hence the apparent discourtesy of lumping together cultured and uncultured natives, and the existence of those disabilities which are so fertile a cause of irritation and disgust to the cultured native.

(b) Educational and economic differentiation is another cause of dissatisfaction. Mr. Maurice Evans puts the grievance thus: "The increasing pressure of the educated natives on the artificial barrier the white man has raised, and is raising still higher, is a danger to both races. To give education, and with it close the door to opportunity, is to make the recipients sullen, disappointed men, or active and dangerous agitators against a system which places them in such a cruel position." The artificial barrier referred to is the economic fence with which the white worker bars the way to trades and pursuits which he has earmarked for his own. We have



already given expression to our conviction that no immediate danger is to be anticipated from the competition of Bantu tradesmen with Europeans, but we have at the same time suggested that the native communities form the legitimate field in which native artisans should ply their trades. So long, however, as complete segregation is impracticable, we must face the possibility of native tradesmen competing with white workers, and ultimately even monopolising certain trades.

Complaints are rife, too, because native clerks have been "weeded out" of the civil service and replaced by whites, or, if retained, are salaried according to an inferior native scale of remuneration. If this is a well-founded grievance, it should be immediately remedied. We have lately been insisting on the principle that Union civil servants should be as far as possible bilingual, and the same principle holds good for the native territories, where *ceteris paribus* a bilingual native should be preferred to a unilingual European. Moreover, it should be the aim of the Government to introduce into the native territories a predominantly native staff, who should receive salaries adjusted to their qualifications and to the cost of living in their respective areas. If in our native schools, high schools and colleges we are training a generation of natives possessed of far higher educational and economic qualifications than their fathers, it would be, as Evans says, not merely cruel, but unwise and perilous, to withhold from them the opportunity for the exercise of their greater knowledge and enlarged capacities.

A just ground for dissatisfaction exists in the scanty subsidies provided by the Union Government for native education. Dr. Loram, in his valuable monograph on **The Education of the South African Native**, adduces reasons for believing that the Government spends on each white pupil forty-five times as much as on each native pupil. The force of this startling fact is somewhat countered by the statement subsequently made that each European in the Union contributes twenty-two times as much to the public treasury as each native. These conclusions are, of course, based on pre-war figures. Two considerations must be kept in mind before we can accept the comparison as valid: (a) Of the European pupils a very large proportion is pursuing higher studies, with a corresponding increase of expenditure; of the native pupils, a very small proportion, with a corresponding diminution of expenditure; (b) the native who is taxed 7s. 4d. per annum may perhaps be contributing more **proportionately to his income**, than the European who pays £7.8.8 per annum in taxes. In any case, Dr. Loram would appear to be not very far wrong when he denies that it is "equitable that because

each European is taxed twenty times as much as each native, he should receive educational opportunities fifty times as great." (p. 253). If, as we have already suggested, the administration of native education were to be placed in the hands of a special department, controlled by the Native Affairs Commission, it should at the same time be provided by Act of Parliament that a certain minimum proportion of what the natives contribute in taxes should be expended upon them in education.

(c) When we come to speak of political disabilities, we touch on a grievance which to a greater extent perhaps than any other rankles in the breast of the educated native, and gives rise to resentment and exacerbation. By the Act of Union it is provided that only "European male adults" shall be qualified parliamentary voters within the States of South Africa, except in the case of the Cape Province, where the franchise is granted to native and coloured voters who possess certain (not very stringent) qualifications. "No taxation without representation" has been from ancient times the slogan of the Western peoples in their struggles for the right of self-government. We cannot be surprised when the Bantu races, however unripe as yet for the enjoyment of free institutions, take over and re-echo our war-cry. They are contributing no inconsiderable portion of our annual income, yet they have no voice in its disposal, and neither art nor part in the discussion and determination of matters that appertain to their own welfare. No man of colour may take his seat in our legislative assemblies, and every avenue of parliamentary redress seems closed against the black and coloured sections of our population. This disability presses most heavily on the educated native in the northern provinces, who feels it to be a hardship and an injustice that, despite his standard of culture and his economic worth to the community, he is permanently debarred from even casting a vote for his own representative in parliament.

Now while we deplore the discrimination displayed in our franchise between whites and blacks, and would gladly see it replaced by a more equitable arrangement, we fear that, in the present temper of the South African people, this consummation is not likely to be soon reached. Once again we would lay stress on the difficulty of making provision for the few exceptions, while the great bulk of the Bantu people is still wholly unfit to be entrusted with the franchise. Experience has proved to demonstration that a young and undeveloped nation can be granted the use of free institutions too soon. The United States Government was too hasty in bestowing the vote on the emancipated slaves of the Southern States,

and today the negro franchise in those states is a delusion and a snare. Peter the Great was too impetuous in trying to raise his Russian subjects. "He saw," says Rousseau, "that his people were barbarous, but he did not see that they were unripe for civilisation. He wished to civilise them, when it was only necessary to discipline them. He wished to produce at once Germans or Englishmen, when he should have begun by making Russians. He prevented his subjects from ever becoming what they might have been, by persuading them that they were what they were not." Let us avoid a like error in our training of the Bantu people, that we may escape a like fate as that which has befallen modern Russia.

The conclusion at which we have arrived is this, that the Bantu should exercise their vote within their own sphere, in the election of representatives to their own Councils and Conferences. To expect that the natives will be fused into one political system with ourselves, is to expect the impossible. The past in which we are severally rooted is too different. The national ideals which we cherish are too incompatible. The roads we have each to follow in order to realise our national aspirations are too divergent. We Europeans have evolved a democratic system of government that is alien to Bantu thought and custom, and to put the franchise into the native's hands while he is in his present evolutionary stage is to place edged tools into the hands of an infant. A tribe of natives in possession of the franchise would be at the mercy of any political party that wished to make capital out of them. Let the native learn the art of self-government, not by claiming a place in the political system of the European, but by assuming a share in his own governmental scheme. The vestiges which still survive of the old clan-system must not be discarded for democratic novelties imported from Europe or America. Let hereditary chieftainship be retained. Let fuller powers be granted to the National Councils and the District Councils. Let native communities raise and administer their own funds, build their roads and bridges, control their own municipalities, and subsidise their own educational undertakings. These duties will absorb all their energies and allow full play to all their slumbering talents. But let them by all means keep clear of the maelstrom of South African party politics.

### **Grievances of the Uneducated Native.**

The grievances of the uneducated native, some of which have been already touched upon, need not be discussed at very great length. They are chiefly three—the present economic pressure, the hated pass laws, and the threatened curtailment



of land rights. (a) The high cost of living has made itself felt in the native communities. There has been a universal rise in the price of the necessities of life. The raw native has to pay twice as much for his blanket, and the town native for his trousers (and he gets a much poorer article for his money) as before the war. Mealies, rice, sugar have all advanced to double and sometimes to treble the prices which prevailed in 1914. Yet native wages have remained at practically the old level. The salaries of white officials have gone up by leaps and bounds. War bonuses have been super-added to increased emoluments. European merchants have put up the prices of their wares. But the native has received no advance of pay that stands in anything like a just relation to the advanced cost of necessities. "How," asked an East London native recently, "can you expect me to be honest on a pound a week, when food, rent and light alone cost me from twenty-five to thirty shillings per week?"

This is a very real and a very serious grievance. It lies at the back of almost all the recent unrest in native circles. The Johannesburg strike and the Port Elizabeth riots were due to nothing else than this maddening economic pinch, and to the reluctance or refusal of employers to grant their black employees a living wage. We desire, as a Church, to urge upon all employers of native labour—in mines, warehouses, offices or workshops, on the farm, the railway or the engineering job—to act upon the apostolic admonition, "Masters, deal justly and equitably with your servants, knowing that ye too have a Master in heaven," (Col. 4:1). And here we must also record our protest against the crying injustice, perpetrated at Johannesburg in 1918, of visiting condign punishment upon the heads of Bantu workmen who venture to go on strike, while in the case of Europeans the strike is acknowledged to be a legitimate weapon in the economic struggle.

We must also call attention to the urgent demand for better housing accommodation and improved sanitary arrangements in native locations. On the ground of self-interest alone it is imperative that a united and determined effort be made to render habitable and wholesome the environment in which our native (and coloured) servants pass their lives. Their habitations are often perfect nurseries of enteric, tuberculosis and contagious diseases, not to speak of the moral filth and contamination which emanate from them. To allow individuals from such squalid surroundings to mix unconstrainedly with ourselves and our children, is surely the worst kind of folly. Municipalities should be encouraged to take this matter in hand without delay; but they can only act vigorously when supported by a vigorous body of Christian public opinion.

Here we may be allowed to animadvert on the facility with which, even in areas in which local prohibition is in force, the natives are able to procure strong drink, which is such a fertile cause of impoverishment, of crime and of physical and moral deterioration. The amount of smuggling which goes on all over the country unchecked and unashamed is enormous, and police regulations seem powerless to deal with the situation. The extremely distressing and disgraceful conditions which prevail on the Rand have become notorious through the publication of the Rooth Report. This evil could never be remedied, but would be aggravated a hundredfold, should the recommendations of the Rooth Commissioners be adopted, and the sale of light wines to natives be rendered legal. The only true remedy in our estimation is the absolute prohibition of all strong drink to natives and coloured people throughout the Union, and increased penalties or even the removal to penal colonies of hardened offenders against the law that makes the drink traffic illicit. Were the sale of intoxicating liquors to our coloured and native peoples completely suppressed, it would result, we are persuaded, in vastly improved social conditions, and one of the chief impediments to the growth and welfare of our mission congregations, especially in the Cape Province, would disappear.

(b) The Pass Laws are a perpetual offence to the natives, as is abundantly proved by the attitude of passive resistance they have adopted towards these laws. In the Northern Provinces the respectable native finds the system particularly irksome and irritating. To be liable to be summoned, at any hour of the day or night, to produce one's pass, is for the average law-abiding native a very humiliating thing. Even General Smuts has admitted that the pass laws are of little use, and frequently kindle fierce fires of anger and resentment. It is not clear to us whether these laws should be abolished altogether, or so re-adjusted that their incidence falls only on the raw native. Perhaps we might for the present acquiesce in the suggestion of the Native Farmers' Association of the Eastern Province, that "the better class native should travel freely and without passes, while the lower class should be required to carry a pass when moving about in places where they are unknown." In any case, the extreme stringency of the pass laws in the Transvaal and the Orange Free State should be immediately mitigated.

(c) The Natives' Land Act of 1913 spread consternation in the ranks of the natives of South Africa. To this matter we have already called attention, and therefore say no more about it. We reiterate the truth that for the natives of South Africa the Land Question is a question of life and death.

This problem — the problem of sharing the inheritance with our younger brother — offers us, Europeans, unsurpassed opportunities for the exercise of those virtues of wisdom, justice, generosity and self-sacrifice, which our common religion and loyalty to our common Lord impose upon us. The natives must be maintained in the indefeasible possession of such reserves, lands and allotments as they already occupy. More than this, since their numbers are increasing at such a rapid rate, other areas, whether unoccupied or but thinly occupied, should be assigned to them in perpetuity, for future expansion and future needs. We should pass, and get our legislatures to pass, a self-denying ordinance, by which we bind ourselves to refrain from the alienation of crown lands, until we have made a sufficient, nay, a bountiful provision for the present and future requirements of the native races. This may appear to be an heroic measure, but we are persuaded that the occasion calls for heroic measures. In many respects South Africa has given a good lead to other African colonies by the wisdom of its native policy. Let it set the same good example in the matter of vindicating for the native his just claim to possess a full share of the soil of his own Continent.

### Conclusion.

We wish, finally, to express our gratification at the establishment of a permanent Native Affairs Commission, with the Prime Minister himself as chairman. We believe that this event marks the dawn of a new era in our relationship to the native races. That relationship has suffered grievously in the past through the lack of two essential factors: (a) permanency in the staff of officials dealing with the natives, and (b) continuity and fixity in the policy followed. Both these wants are supplied by the constitution of a settled Board of Advice and Direction in all matters pertaining to the native races. We trust that the Commission will have the sympathy of all earnest-minded South Africans in its delicate and onerous duties, and that it will speedily secure the full confidence of the native people. That would lead, we venture to hope, to the ultimate severance of native affairs generally from the affairs of the Union, and the establishment, under proper safeguards, of a department which, acting as the executive of the Commission, shall deal with all questions of native education, agriculture, public works, land tenure, taxation and local government.

The presence of the native races in our midst provides us with our supreme problem; the intercourse we must maintain with them affords us our supreme opportunity; the treatment which we shall mete out to them will be our supreme



test of character. To see around us in vast numbers a weaker race, and not to oppress it; a virile race, and not exploit it; a backward race, and not sink to its level, constitutes a task which will strain every fibre of our moral being. In attempting the task, many races have failed, and the reason is not far to seek. While their intentions may have been good, their humanitarianism was not equal to the task, because it was not reinforced by religious motives. It is only in so far as we are completely imbued with the spirit of Christ, that we can hope to solve the immense problem that faces us so insistently.

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